

June 2023

A special Session meeting was called on June 13 by 2 members to receive a report from the Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) and to see if there was more Session could do to support the PNC. Guests included the PNC moderator and 2 PNC members. Sharon Easterling, PNC Moderator, started by giving an update on 2 candidates that were given strong consideration; both had recently accepted other positions. The PCUSA 's Church Leadership Connection (CLC) website is also being updated, which will require a revised Ministry Information Form (MIF). Two areas in which Session could help were discussed: what it means to be a More Light Presbyterian congregation, and how Session is addressing some of the concerns raised in the Holy Cow report. It was also noted that, although work of the PNC is confidential, there is certain information that may be shared with Session. Protecting the confidentiality of candidates is critical; some information can be helpful to Session in planning (e.g., interim pastor status, pulpit supply, events, budgets).

Session had its regular meeting on June 25, 2023. Bryce Wiebe, the Associate for Vital Congregations for Eastminster Presbytery, led a discussion as a follow-up to previous discussions by Session on being a More Light congregation. [As background, Westminster first became a "More Light Presbyterian" ("MLP") church around July 2019.] MLP seeks to assist church leadership in recognizing shared values and extending hospitality. A church can state that they are a More Light congregation in contrast to the news which often says the church hates the LGBTQIA community. Bryce noted that it is hard to be the body of God. To help address questions, sending a letter to the congregation was considered. Pastor David noted that the PCUSA Book of Order states that "A congregation shall welcome all persons who trust in God's grace in Jesus Christ and desire to become part of the fellowship and ministry of his Church (F-1.0403). No person shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith. The Gospel leads members to extend the fellowship of Christ to all persons. Failure to do so constitutes a rejection of Christ himself and a scandal to the Gospel." (G-1.0302). Westminster's July 2019 Script reported to the congregation that Session had voted to endorse the mission statement of MLP, "Following the risen Christ, and seeking to make the Church a true community of hospitality, the mission of More Light Presbyterians is to work for the full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people in the life, ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in society." A final draft will be sent to and reviewed by Session.

Average worship attendance for May (3 regular in person worship services) was 76; average viewings on YouTube were 71. A joint worship service for 10 West Area congregations of Eastminster Presbytery was held on May 28; in person attendance was 191, with 114 viewings on YouTube.

Pastor David's current contract ends on July 31, 2023. The suggestion was made to refer responsibility to Personnel to review terms for renewal and then present these to Session for approval in July. If the contract is not renewed, arrangements will need to be made for pulpit supply and other responsibilities (e.g., head of staff). Personnel heard from staff that they are confident with the support they have been given by the interim pastor. In lieu of inviting Session members to share their thoughts with Personnel, 2 members called for a special Session meeting on July 6 at 7 pm to facilitate a performance review by Session. Pastor David will not be present and will appoint a moderator.

Preliminary unaudited data through May 31, 2023: actual revenues \$238,118; budgeted \$203,367. Actual expenses \$221,139; budget \$251,580. Net (actual revenues less actual expenses) is a surplus of \$16,979. Personnel expenses are below budget by approximately \$33,397; Properties maintenance

expenses are above budget by approximately \$16,095 (roof and grounds maintenance, snow plowing contract).

Outreach decided to send our share (40%) of the Pentecost offering income to the Early Childhood division of Urban Vision and to Fostering Independence (youth coming out of foster care).